July 2003

RE: Direct Loan Tools for Windows, Version 3.0

Dear DL Tools Users:

We are pleased to announce the availability of Direct Loan (DL) Tools for Windows, Version 3.0. DL Tools is a multi-year application designed to help you perform the following tasks:

- Rebuild loan and disbursement data in EDExpress using an automated process
- Compare the SAS and/or 732 reports to loans and actual disbursements recorded in EDExpress or an external file, and/or compare the reports to the DL Tools Cash Database
- Print the SAS and/or 732 reports in readable formats
- Track cash receipts (drawdowns) and returns of excess cash for Direct Loan

This release of DL Tools was developed to process data for multiple years. Version 3.0 contains Rebuild and Cash Management functionalities for the 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 cycles, and Compare functionalities for the 2001-2002, 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 cycles.

The Compare and Cash Management functionality can be utilized by any Direct Loan School, including schools using custom or combination systems to process Direct Loans and EDExpress-only users. The Rebuild process can be utilized by any Direct Loan School that wishes to rebuild Direct Loan records in an EDExpress database. DL Tools has the same "look and feel" as EDExpress.

Important Installation Note: DL Tools for Windows, Version 3.0 is an upgrade to Version 2.0. If you had installed Version 2.0 previously, Version 3.0 must be installed as a Custom Install without the Database, **NOT** a Full Install. **If you perform a Full Install of Version 3.0 and Version 2.0 exists on your system, you will overwrite your Version 2.0 database.**

Important DL Tools Comparison Reports Note: DL Tools Loan and Disbursement Comparison Reports are designed to be run using the SAS Reports with YTD detail, NOT monthly detail. Please see DLB-02-36 for information about default settings and SAS Option Selections. You can choose other options, for example YTD detail, by contacting your customer service representative.

How to Get the Software and Documentation

We are distributing DL Tools via the Internet. You can download the software and the related user documentation from the U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Download Web site located at **FSAdownload.ed.gov**.

The *Direct Loan Tools for Windows Installation Guide* provides complete installation instructions. The "Downloading Paper Documentation and Software from the FSAdownload Web Site" section explains the download instructions.

If you have trouble using the FSAdownload Web site, contact CPS/WAN Technical Support at **800/330-5947** or via e-mail at **cpswan@ncs.com**.

Note: Some organizations restrict their users from downloading from FTP sites. If you have trouble downloading, try again later. If you are still unable to download, contact your technical support staff to ensure you have full FTP download rights.

If You Have Technical Support and Policy Questions

If you have SFA technical support questions and subscribe to SFATECH, you can post a message on the SFATECH listserv. Information about subscribing to the SFATECH listserv can be found at the following URL:

www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/sfatech/listserv.html

Note: Make sure you include both your TG number and your telephone number in your message. Department staff or the financial aid partner responsible for the system will research your question and post a response to the listserv so that everyone can benefit from the information.

If you have questions regarding DL Tools such as installation issues, software problem resolution, software functionality, and technical assistance, you can call CPS/WAN Technical Support. You can reach them Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (CT), at **800/330-5947**. You can also e-mail inquiries, comments, or suggestions 24 hours a day to **cpswan@ncs.com**. A representative will respond within 24 business hours.

If you have questions regarding DL Tools policy issues, you can call FSAP Customer Service Call Center. You can reach them Monday through Friday, *9 a.m. - 5 p.m. (ET),* at **800/433-7327**. You can also e-mail inquiries, comments, or suggestions 24 hours a day to **fsa.customer.support@ed.gov**.

CPS/WAN Technical Support

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DIRECT LOAN TOOLS FOR WINDOWS VERSION 3.0

This release of DL Tools adds functionality for program year 2003-2004. This release also contains the functionality for prior program years that were available in DL Tools Version 2.0.

Important Installation Note: DL Tools for Windows, Version 3.0 is an upgrade to Version 2.0. If you previously installed Version 2.0, Version 3.0 must be installed as a Custom Install without the Database, **NOT** a Full Install. **If you perform a Full Install of Version 3.0 and Version 2.0 exists on your system, you will overwrite your Version 2.0 database.**

Product Enhancements

The following product enhancements have been incorporated into Direct Loan (DL) Tools for Windows, Version 3.0.

Import

- DL Tools will continue to provide import capabilities for the fixed length version of the DL Rebuild. Edits will be built into the software to stop users from completing the rebuild process, if the following setup fields are not populated in EDExpress:

  Source Entity ID

  Reporting Entity ID

  Attended Entity ID

  Funding Method

  The Disbursement Release Indicator field will be deduced, if the rebuild disbursement detail record is populated.

Web Generated Disbursements

- Web Generated disbursements will be filtered out and will not be rebuilt in the EDExpress software during the rebuild process.

- Web Generated disbursements details that have been filtered out are added to the Import Edit Report.

Report

- The Student and/or Borrowers name are added to the SAS – Loan Detail pages if the school has requested they be included in their SAS.

Rebuild

- The Disbursement Activity field in the DL Rebuild File, for 2003-2004 and subsequent program years is deduced.

  For Active Program Years 2003-2004 and forward, the Disbursement Activity field is deduced and populated in the rebuilt record based on the Disbursement Sequence Number in the DL Rebuild File using the following logic:

  If Disbursement Sequence Number = 01, the Actual Disbursement Type = D

  If Disbursement Sequence Number is > 01 and the date is the same as that of sequence 01 transaction or, if there are Q disbursements for this Loan ID/Disbursement Number, if the date is the same as that of the Q disbursement with highest sequence number less than this disbursement's sequence number, set the Actual Disbursement Type = A.

  If the Actual Disbursement Type is not set to D or A by the preceding logic it will be set to Q.

- The ARN field is left blank in the DL Rebuild file.

System Setup

- Cash Management functionality is now similar to the print dialog. For example, there is an ellipsis button to select a school code.

DL Tools Supports These Printers

We tested the following printers that are Windows NT 4.0, Windows 98, Windows Me, Windows XP, and Windows 2000 compatible:

- HP8150
- HP4000N
- HP8000N
- HP4
- HP4M
- HP4MPlus
- HP3Si
- HP4Si
- HP5Si
- HP5SiMX

DL Tools Benchmarking Results

We performed benchmarking tests on DL Tools to determine how it operates in certain operating environments.

Imports

The benchmarking results for DL Tools import files are as follows.

- These tests were all completed on a Pentium 1000 with 512 MB RAM.

- Files were imported into an empty database.

- The Time Elapsed column indicates the measurement of time starting when the user clicks OK in the Import dialog box and the import process begins until the import statistics are displayed.

Component	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Time Elapsed
Rebuild	Win NT 4.0	1000 originations/4000 disbursements	4 minutes 48 seconds
Rebuild	Windows 98	1000 originations/4000 disbursements	4 minutes 09 seconds
Rebuild	Windows 2000	1000 originations/4000 disbursements	3 minutes 12 seconds
Rebuild	Windows Me	1000 originations/4000 disbursements	4 minutes 03 seconds
Rebuild	Windows XP	1000 originations/4000 disbursements	3 minutes 31 seconds
School Account Statement (SAS)	Win NT 4.0	2 Cash Summary/ 8 Disbursement Summary/ 100 Cash Detail/ 200 Loan Detail (loan level) / 800 Loan Detail (disbursement activity level)	3 seconds
School Account Statement (SAS)	Windows 98	2 Cash Summary/ 8 Disbursement Summary/ 100 Cash Detail/ 200 Loan Detail (loan level) / 800 Loan Detail (disbursement activity level)	4 seconds
School Account Statement (SAS)	Windows 2000	2 Cash Summary/ 8 Disbursement Summary/ 100 Cash Detail/ 200 Loan Detail (loan level) / 800 Loan Detail (disbursement activity level)	3 seconds

Reports

The benchmarking results for DL Tools reports and lists are as follows:

- These tests were all completed on a Pentium 1000 MHz with 512 MB RAM.

- The Average Time Elapsed column indicates the length of time starting when the user clicks OK in the DL Tools Print dialog box and when the operating system (Windows NT/98/Me/XP/2000) print dialog appears.

- The Benchmarking Volume is the number of records and approximate number of pages that were printed in the test.

Component	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Time Elapsed
2003-2004 Cash Report	Win NT 4.0	192 Cash/3876 Disbursements/ 5 pages	3 seconds
2003-2004 Cash Report	Windows 98	192 Cash/3876 Disbursements/ 5 pages	4 seconds
2003-2004 Cash Report	Windows 2000	192 Cash/3876 Disbursements/ 5 pages	3 seconds
2003-2004 Cash Report	Windows Me	192 Cash/3876 Disbursements/ 5 pages	4 seconds
2003-2004 Cash Report	Windows XP	192 Cash/3876 Disbursements/ 5 pages	4 seconds
Loan Detail Comparison	Win NT 4.0	35 loans/5 pages	2 seconds
Loan Detail Comparison	Windows 98	35 loans/5 pages	2 seconds
Loan Detail Comparison	Windows 2000	35 loans/5 pages	2 seconds
Loan Detail Comparison	Windows Me	35 loans/5 pages	2 seconds
Loan Detail Comparison	Windows XP	35 loans/5 pages	2 seconds

Reminders

New Hardware Requirements

The U.S. Department of Education produced a document titled "Analyzing your FSA Computing Needs to be more Productive and Save Money" which is available on IFAP at the following URL:

ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/attachments/1129MinPCneeds.pdf

We suggest you read through this document to get a better idea of your school's computing needs and what your processing requirements may be.

Back Up Your Database Weekly

You should back up your Direct Loan Tools for Windows database file (DLTools.mdb) regularly so you do not lose your data. We recommend that you back up your files at least once a week.

Direct Loan Tools does not include a backup utility. You must use your own backup software. Be sure to test your backup software to verify that it can reliably restore your backups.